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# ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

## THE ANARCHIST LABOR MOVEMENT

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### HOUSING THE FREE COMMUNITY

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In the future land use planning must be done by the community with the immediate and long term needs of the community in mind. Worker self-management will direct the functions of workplaces, but so-called “property rights” will no longer be transferrable. Community self-management will be by workers in the community who will have to balance the need for housing with the social economic needs of workplaces *and* residents in the community [production/distribution/exchange of resources and products for use/needs, not profit]. A volunteer **workers housing committee** in the workplace will gather housing need information from workers. In the community, a volunteer **housing working group** will survey housing needs and potential existing housing resources. Both will include persons with building safety expertise [structure safety (fire, vermin, quake), electricity, plumbing, *etc.*]. We want to enable workers and their families to safely live in the communities where they work. Slumlords should be identified and have their wealth and resources expropriated to help make their former residential properties more safe and habitable.

Without social classes, some communities may become obsolete because they don't have the resource subsidies to maintain them, or provide basic services like fire protection. At the very least, we should rethink urban sprawl and existing inefficient suburban development patterns [I expect that to be done by residents]. At the least, all new housing should be attached to public sewer, water, and electric utilities and have enough unused utility, traffic, and solid waste disposal capacity to support the new development. Abolishing capitalism and the state will eliminate large sectors of jobs the pre-revolutionary economy, re-employ/re-deploy persons previously in those jobs, and redistribute those resources elsewhere. This will also affect areas now housing the upper classes [e.g., replacing mansions with necessities like apartments, parks, or schools].

### INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

Anarchists sometimes form intentional communities [co-op houses, safe houses]. These can be organized around an existing single-family **dwelling**, an **apartment** building [incl. structures converted to apartments], or a **farm**. Community members share the rent, utility bills, and the responsibility of the upkeep of the home. They divide up the space and each live in separate quarters. They also have common spaces for cooking, eating, hygiene, and other social and shared activities. They should be retrofitted to be more energy efficient [renewable energy may be affordable] and ecologically sustainable where possible. They need off street parking where cars or bicycles could be safely parked and maintained.

The term safe house often refers to a refuge or asylum from the power of the State [cops, *etc.*]. Intentional communities may also be safe houses by being centers of political, counter-economic, and autonomous activities [e.g., free schools, day care, work shops, publishing, infoshops, distros, gardens, mixed use]. This would be limited by what people bring into their homes. We want to make safe houses free of the corrupting influences of capitalism like drug and alcohol abuse; and domestic violence.

### EXISTING HOUSING

The fastest way to create additional housing units is to refurbish “illegal” and substandard units so they are structurally safe, sanitary and functional places to live: garage conversions, granny flats (above garage), carriage houses, squatted/“abandoned” apartment buildings (“land banking”), subdivided houses/co-op houses, supplemental dwelling units, *etc.*. Residents should be helped to be able to refurbish their own housing or organize its repairs and upkeep themselves, as much as is possible. Haphazard housing would temporarily keep residents from being displaced/homeless, while more permanent housing is built for them.

Persons should be enabled to temporarily live in hotels or motels while they wait to move into apartments. Without capitalism, barriers to permanent housing like security deposits and will be eliminated. **Workers Housing Committees** will place new residents based on vacant housing units, need and proximity to work.

## ADAPTIVE RE-USE

There are “obsolete” and/or abandoned land uses which may be converted into residences: Class C office buildings [before “international style” glass boxes], warehouses, abandoned manufacturers/factories. This is also a way to preserve older artistically or architecturally attractive buildings.

*“Brownfields” are sites where industrial activity involving heavy metals, petrochemicals, or other toxic chemicals once took place; and, as a result, poisonous materials may have leaked from storage tanks, etc.; and contaminated soils and/or groundwater. It is important to set this land aside for ecological cleaning and reclamation and never use it for residences, growing food, schools, or other sensitive land uses.*

Communities will select construction collectives to do design, rehabilitation and new construction. There may be abandoned buildings/neighborhoods in the future whose resources can be cannibalized for other construction or repair projects.. Building construction collectives will secure their work sites against theft.

## DENSIFICATION

*Power, Water, Sewer and Solid Waste Infrastructure must be expanded while increasing residential density.* Supplemental dwelling units may be added to the back yards of existing houses to convert them to multi-plex (multi-family) housing. Large houses can also be subdivided into apartments. Houses may be torn down to build apartment buildings: The cost of new apartment buildings/complexes can be reduced by limiting their height to 4-6 storeys over a concrete parking garage/foundation which can be safely be build with wood and no concrete or steel frame [we want to build as many new safe/sanitary/reliable residences as our resources and labor allow]. Structurally safe higher density steel frame residential and mixed use buildings will be built where local communities favor them. By eliminating overcrowded and inhumane housing conditions, we are also committing to maintain them in working order.

The majority of new apartment buildings will be built into mixed use (commercial+residential) and residential **Housing-Transit Corridors** along streets served by electric buses or trolleys so transit-dependent people can travel to work or shop without a car. It will be necessary to tear down existing lower density residences and commercial land uses to build these corridors, but community residents will make those decisions where needed and provide new housing for anyone displaced by new construction. New housing units will be made available first to persons who work in the neighborhood and second to persons living in overcrowded housing [over 1.0 residents per room]. Solar (street) setbacks, wide tree-lined sidewalks, and parks/community gardens [incl. rooftop gardens] will be used to make apartments seem less dense. Overcrowded existing communities should be priority recipients of these corridors.

## SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS

Persons with common handicaps and disabilities can live among the general population if building and streetscape standards are agreed upon which accommodate them.

Housing people with special needs will free up the housing where they now live: It will be the most long-term housing needs. The most obvious special need is for elderly and retired persons. Apartments and multiples share responsibility and cost for upkeep of grounds and common areas, including a commons or community center. “Managed Care” is a combination of elderly apartments and a small hospital for urgent care of elderly residents. Elderly housing is especially vulnerable (life-threatening) during natural disasters.

Another type of special housing is housing for large families. This type of apartment complex could include day care and preschool facilities for the children of residents. These complexes would be built as-needed to avoid overcrowding. There may also be other kinds of “intentional communities” like co-housing in Europe.

Multi-unit transitional housing for (women and children) victims of domestic violence, homeless shelters for cold and inclement weather and multi-unit transitional housing for homeless persons are more specialized. We also need out-patient medical care and mental health care for persons now “treated”/incarcerated in jails. We want to release unjustly imprisoned populations [non-murderers], but we need a plan to house, clothe, feed and employ them first; rather than just dumping them on the street.

We also need proper collectivized boarding schools for homeless, orphan, or abandoned children.

Other special needs will be accommodated in cooperation with neighboring communities on an *ad hoc* basis.